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TELEGRAM

December 15, 2003

To: No Action Addressee
Action: Unknown
From: AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI (ABU DHABI 5295 - UNKNOWN)
TAGS: PREL, PGOV, PARM, MOPS
Captions: None
Subject: SCENESETTER FOR CSAF VISIT TO THE UAE, DECEMBER 17-21, 2003
Ref: None

S E C R E T ABU DHABI 05295

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INFO: FCS
CXABU:
ACTION: POL
INFO: DAO USLO ECON RSO AMB DCM P/M

DISSEMINATION: POL
CHARGE: PROG

APPROVED: AMB:MMWAHBA
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CLEARED: DAO:BKERINS USLO:KMASSENGIL

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S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 04 ABU DHABI 005295

SIPDIS

NOFORN

CSAF FOR GENERAL JUMPER
NSC FOR THEROUX
DOD FOR OSD/ISA/NESA
STATE FOR NEA/ARP, NEA/NGA AND PM/RSAT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/14/13
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PARM](#) [MOPS](#) [GCC](#) [IZ](#) [TC](#)
SUBJECT: SCENESETTER FOR CSAF VISIT TO THE UAE, DECEMBER 17-21, 2003

Ref: A) Abu Dhabi 5003, B) Abu Dhabi 4613

[1](#)1. (U) Classified by Ambassador Marcelle M. Wahba, reasons

1.5 (B) and (D).

12. (C) General Jumper: I would like to welcome you back to the UAE. The highlight of December in the UAE has been the 2003 Dubai Air Show, the third largest air show in the world and the premier aviation and air industry show in the Gulf region. The Dec. 7-11 Air Show was preceded by a UAE Air Force-hosted Middle East Air Chiefs' Conference held in Dubai. The UAEG regards both events as huge successes, and so do we, particularly since they relied heavily on USAF participation and cooperation. I want to thank you for supporting the Air Show and for making our robust USG presence an important message to the UAE and the region. U.S. military aircraft on display included AH-64D Longbow, E-8A JStar, F-14, E-2C, EA-6B, C-2A, P-3AIP, C-130J, F-117, A-10, F-16, and C-17. During the Dubai Air Show Secretary Roche met with Defense Minister General Shaykh Mohammed bin Rashid (MbR), Crown Prince of Dubai, as well as with Deputy Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Chief of Staff of UAE Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Mohammed bin Zayed (MbZ).

13. (C) MbZ was appointed Deputy Crown Prince on Nov. 30. General Moseley also met with MbZ during the Air Show. MbZ's promotion clears up any doubts about who will assume the position of Abu Dhabi Crown Prince after Shaykh Zayed departs the scene and current Crown Prince Shaykh Khalifa assumes the presidency. We have requested meetings for you with MbZ and Major General Khalid bin Abdullah Al Buainnan, the Commander of the United Arab Emirates Air force and Air Defense.

SUGGESTED THEMES

14. (C) We propose that you touch on the following key bilateral military issues, in addition to the more general themes outlined below:

-- Congratulate your hosts on the Dubai Air Show, and underscore that it advances the U.S. security and commercial interests, directly supports USCENTCOM war fighting and engagement goals and objectives, furthers military-to-military relations, and improves regional access.

-- Focus the UAE military leadership on the need, as part of our commitment to building and solidifying our strong military ties, to begin the process of negotiating a Defense Cooperation Agreement to succeed the unratified agreement which expires in 2006.

-- Express our enthusiasm about the validation course at the Gulf Air Warfare Center, Al Dhafra Air Base, scheduled for January 2004. The Center will be a model for multilateral training in the region.

15. (S) More broadly, you may also wish to:

-- Congratulate MbZ on his promotion to Deputy Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi.

-- Express thanks for the UAE's exemplary support for U.S. and coalition efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan, namely access to bases and logistical support, including air and sealift of Bulgarian troops to Iraq, the UAE SOC deployment at Bagram, as well as extensive intelligence coordination. Thank MbZ for his offer to use a squadron of the UAE's newly acquired South African Seeker II UAV's.

-- Pass on our gratitude for the UAE's generous humanitarian assistance, especially the UAE Armed Force's establishment of the very successful Shaykh Zayed hospital in Baghdad and the UAE's efforts to re-supply with equipment and medicine other Iraqi hospitals and the provision of basic foodstuffs to the Iraqi people.

BILATERAL MILITARY ISSUES

Defense Cooperation Agreement

¶6. (C) We need to start the process of discussing a successor agreement to the Defense Cooperation Agreement (DCA), which comes up for renewal in 2006. The existing agreement was never ratified by the UAE's Federal National Council. We have been getting by on ad hoc arrangements. With the growing presence here (Jebel Ali Port in Dubai is the busiest USN port-of-call outside the United States; and there are 1,100 USAF personnel and civilian contractors at Al Dhafra Air Base supporting Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operations in the Horn of Africa), we need to put our relationship on a more solid footing. Following a meeting with the Ambassador in late October during which she noted the need to start addressing the DCA issue, MbZ directed his staff to begin discussions with us on the way ahead for a re-negotiated DCA. This will require heavy lifting on both sides and the sooner we agree on a strategy and define our "non-negotiable" items, the easier it will be to proceed with the Emiratis. Embassy representatives met with GHQ lawyers in mid-November to hear their views. The Emiratis continue to have reservations about criminal jurisdiction provisions, as well as concerns over perceived ambiguities regarding the status of US personnel in the UAE. The Embassy will make a formal recommendation on the way ahead for the DCA after the first of the year.

Air Warfare Center

¶7. (C) The Gulf Air Warfare Center (GAWC) at al-Dhafra Air Base has tremendous potential to become a resource for multilateral training, defense cooperation, and compatibility. The GAWC will provide an excellent opportunity for CENTCOM pilots to hone their skills in theater. It comes with the added benefit of offering the perfect setting for our officers to build long-term relationships with their Arab and European counterparts. The GAWC represents the UAE leadership's commitment to increasing inter-operability with U.S. and coalition forces.

Predator

¶8. (S) Over the past year, MbZ raised his desire to procure the armed Predator B with just about every interlocutor in Washington, and Deputy Prime Minister and de facto Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamdan bin Zayed Al-Nahyan raised the Predator issue at his meetings in late October in Washington, including with the Secretary and Deputy Secretary of State. We believe he will raise it with you. Both MbZ and HbZ believe this system will provide the UAE the much-needed capability to survey and defend its long, porous coasts and inland borders. We know that you are actively involved in the current policy review regarding the release of this MTCR Category I weapon system to the UAE. CENTCOM in September forwarded an assessment to OSD supporting sale of an unarmed Predator B to the UAE. The Emiratis will find it difficult to understand that we can sell them F-16s while denying them an armed Predator B.

ATACMs

¶9. (S) We are moving forward with the ATACMs 1A deal. The Emiratis have agreed to the principles outlined in what will be a regional Memorandum of Understanding governing the use of this system. We have forwarded the MOU to GHQ for UAE approval. Once we have their approval, the next step in the process is for GHQ to submit an LOR for Pricing and Availability, after which we can begin the LOA process. We are awaiting the provision of a revised Pricing and

Availability and Acquisition, following an Emirati visit to the US last July to discuss their forecast system requirements.

Remote sensing (If Raised)

¶10. (S) The Emiratis continue to request new, long-term access to satellite imagery of Iran and the UAE region, as part of its strategic relationship with the United States. A USG interagency team visited the UAE in November to discuss a government-to-government agreement that the USG had provided to the UAE last May. In an unexpected move, the Emiratis presented alternative text to the agreement, requesting an option to lease a US satellite. The USG team must now review the proposal and respond to the Emiratis when a review is complete.

BROADER ISSUES

Afghanistan and Iraq: Support for Coalition Efforts

¶11. (S) The UAE Armed Forces has deployed a 35-man Emirati Special Operations contingent to Bagram Air Base. As you know, the UAE continues to play a very helpful role in Afghanistan, particularly in the provision of humanitarian and reconstruction assistance. The UAE Armed Forces provided the Afghan National Army with approximately \$50 million in assistance in kind in 2002 and overall humanitarian assistance has crossed the \$50 million mark. The UAEG also continues to provide substantial personal financial support to President Karzai. In Iraq, the UAEG provided a "lift" in support of Iraqi stabilization efforts.

¶12. (S) Regarding MbZ's offer to us to use a squadron of the UAE's newly acquired South African Seeker II UAV's, CENTCOM/J5, CJTF-180, and CJSOTF-A are coordinating with the Emiratis to deploy this capability in Afghanistan in January 2004. A joint US team traveled to the UAE in early November to discuss operational UAV experience in Afghanistan, command relationships, integration and fusion, intel support, strategic lift, beddown location, force protection, logistics, and third country contractor support. We are working the details for implementation.

Iraq: UAE Humanitarian/Medical Assistance

¶13. (SBU) As you know, the Emiratis were among the first in the Arab world to step up to the plate in providing much-needed humanitarian assistance and medical relief to the Iraqi people. The Embassy, the HOC in Kuwait and CENTCOM worked closely with the UAE Red Crescent Authority to move supplies into Iraq and transport Iraqi patients to the UAE for treatment. This cooperation continues. Thanks to the system put in place by CENTCOM and the HOC, the Emiratis are now moving assistance into Iraq on a routine basis using their own C-130s. The Shaykh Zayed hospital in Baghdad continues to receive hundreds of patients a day.

Iraq: Timely Public Statements

¶14. (C) When U.S. officials confirmed Saddam Hussein's capture on Dec. 14, HbZ told the Ambassador that he thought it was a good outcome that Saddam was captured alive because the Iraqis will have a chance to try him. He said he hoped to hear similar news about Al Qaida leaders UBL and Zawahiri. Since Saddam's fall last April, the Emiratis have strongly supported Iraqi delegations at official meetings in the region or when they visited the UAE. The UAEG also issued strong public condemnation for the attacks against the UN's Baghdad headquarters and against Ayatollah Baqir al-Hakim and his followers in Najaf. Privately, the

senior leadership has told us that they applaud the U.S. decision to accelerate the transfer of authority to the Iraqis (see ref A).

Iran: Worries Persist

¶15. (S) All of our senior Emirati interlocutors worry about Iran's intentions in Iraq and in the Arabian Gulf region as a whole. Iran is one of the major reasons the UAEG is actively pursuing acquisition of ATACMS, remote sensing technology, and is so keen to get Predator. The Emiratis have urged us to help prevent Iran from meddling in Iraq's domestic affairs. They view Iran's nuclear program with deep suspicion and have consistently supported a tough approach by the IAEA.

WAHBA